No. 34 (a) connected with the Erumapetti road ;

(2) whether the Vellattanjur Panchayat has submitted a proposal for opening this road ;

(3) when was the first proposal made ;

(4) at what subsequent dates has the same proposal been renewed by the said Panchayat ;

(5) what action has been taken upon the petition and the proposal of the Panchayat ?

Mr. I. Raman Menon.—(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) In 1098.

(4) In 1101 and 1102.

(5) The petition and the proposals of the Panchayat were enquired into. The work had to be put off for want of funds.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—Answer to part 5. May I know whether the Government knows the length of the road that was proposed?

Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.—It is about 4 miles.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—What is the length to be travelled now along the existing road from Vellattanjur to Erumappetti?

Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.- It is a detour from Vellattanjur. You have to go to Vadakkancheri and thence to Erumappetti.

Mr. I. Raman Menon.—It is about four teen or fifteen miles.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—But the proposed road is only about 3 miles. As matters now stand, people have to travel about 14 or 15 miles distance to reach this distance of 3 miles. Has the Government decided to construct this straight road?

Mr. I. Raman Menon.—I think it was once explained in this Council that the opening of the road through this particular locality is very expensive. In the first place there are wet lands on the way and then we have to put up a bridge and these may cost 10 or 12 thousand rupees.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—So it is the enormous cost that stands in the way?

Mr. I. Raman Menon.—Yes.

Stopping of further service connections in Ernakulm.

76. Dr. A. G. Menon.—Will the Government be pleased to state:—

(1) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the sub-leader published in the ' Aikyam' paper, dated

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4th July 1928 regarding the order passed by the Chief Engineer refusing to open new pipes in the Ernakulam Municipality in spite of the repeated call from the Chairman ;

(2) if so, has the Engineer authority to do so ;

(3) has the attention of the Government been drawn to the grave allegations regarding

(a) the work in the Head Water Works,

(b) surreptitious sale of water to steamers and boats by the staff;

(4) if so, did the Government take any action ;

(5) if so, the nature of the action the Government took ?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—(1) Yes.

(2) This was done under Government orders.

(3) The allegations are not true.

(4) and (5). Vide answer to (3).

Dr. A. G. Menon.—In the answer it is stated 'this was done under Government orders'. Did the Government communicate this order to the Chairman of the Municipal Council?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—No. It was not communicated to the Chairman. It was necessary to communicate it only to the Chief Engineer who is in charge of the works.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Though the Chairman was corresponding with the Chief Engineer, Government never thought of communicating it to the Chairman?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—The Chief Engineer would have given the information to the Chairman.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—And in spite of that, the Chairman went on corresponding with the Chief Engineer ?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—I cannot say.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—The Municipal Chairman has nothing to do with the Chief Engineer, and the Chief Engineer acted under orders of Government. Did the Government inform the Municipal Chairman that he has no right to ask the Chief Engineer to do the work?

President.—No. The correspondence passed between the Municipal Chairman and the Chief Engineer. The Chief Engineer referred the matter to Government for orders and the Government passed orders and communicated them to the Chief Engineer and there the matter stopped.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—So has the Chairman anything to do in the matter ?

President.—Between the Chief Engineer and the Chairman, so far as the Water Works is concerned, the Chief Engineer is in charge of the Water Works and the Chairman is inter-

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ested in the proper distribution of water, and he can make the necessary recommendations to that effect to the Chief Engineer.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—So the Chairman has no control over the laying of pipes, and the Chief Engineer is the executive authority. The Chairman is only to make requests, and if the Chief Engineer likes, he may do them.

President.—Yes. The Chairman has nothing to do with the Water Works and he is not the ultimate deciding authority in these matters.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—May I know the date on which this order was passed that the Chief Engineer is the final authority in laying pipes and the Chairman has nothing to do with that?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—The Water Works Installation was placed under the Public Works Department from the very beginning.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—So am I to understand that, from the very beginning, the Chairman was at the mercy of the Chief Engineer? When he refuses the Chairman's request, he is at the mercy of the Chief Engineer.

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—Refusals from the point of view of technical importance. Up to that he has got the power under Government orders. The Chief Engineer can say 'if you are going to lay pipes, the whole supply will be jeopardised,' and Government can approve of that suggestion and pass final orders in the matter.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—But in this case it was not communicated to the Municipal Council.

President.—I suppose that the Chief Engineer must have communicated that fact to the Chairman.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Does not the Municipal Regulation place the control of Water Works under the Chairman of the Municipal Council?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—The rules existing now do not place the Water Work System under the Chairman.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I speak of Water Works within the Municipality. The Chairman is to collect the water cess, and the Water Works must naturally be under him, and I think under the Municipal Act it is under him.

President.—As a matter of fact, it is now under the Public Works Department.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Why was this deviation made by the Government?

President.—From the very beginning it was under the Public Works Department.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I am reliably informed that it was not so by one of the ex-Chairmen.

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President.—The Ernakulam Municipality had at one time power over the Water Works at Chowwara.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Not the Chowwara Water Works, but I speak of distribution within the Municipal area.

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—The Municipal Chairmen still have a voice in the matter.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—But you say the Chief Engineer is the final authority in the matter of extensions and laying of new pipes.

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—For the quantity of water supply and for anything which will affect proper distribution, the Engineer is responsible.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Suppose the Municipality wishes to have more service connections. The quantity of water for distribution by the Municipality having been technically fixed by the Chief Engineer, is it open to the Municipality to make further extensions and distribute water or not within the Municipality?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—The efficiency of distribution is a matter of supreme importance and for that the Public Works Department is the authority on that question, and, if they think that further extensions will jeopardise supply or will create unsatisfactory distribution, it is for the Chief Engineer to say that further extension could not be allowed.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—The time is up.

President.—We took some time for the preliminary items, and so we can continue.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Was the original work started with the intention of supplying the whole town or part of the town?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—The original supply was started with a capacity of 4 lakhs and 50 thousand gallons a day. We supplied last summer more than 6 lakhs of gallons a day.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Within the Ernakulam Municipality alone?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—Out of this 6 lakhs, nearly 16,000 gallons went to Cochin.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—The answer for the last part is 'the allegations are not true.' Here is a sub-leader in a paper charging the Public Works Department with bribery, and the Government says that the allegations are not true. Did the Government make any enquiry or did the Government ask the paper to contradict that statement? Here is a local paper of influence and I may say a responsible man edits it and he accuses the Department with a grave allegation.

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Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.—I rise to a point of order. This is a supplementary question, and if a question contains a statement, the Member asking the question must make himself responsible for the accuracy of that statement. I wish to know from the Hon'ble Member whether he is satisfied with the accuracy of his statement.

Dr. A. G. Menon.— I am now relying on a paper and the editor is a respectable man. On his sub-leadership I sent a question to the Government containing this grave allegation. My question is whether the Government have practically enquired into the matter. There is a real allegation of bribery and it is a reflection on the Government I should think.

Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.—The question should have been more accurate and specific.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Of course, the leader of the House is anxious to support the Government and he might say so many things. There is a grave allegation against the Government and I appeal to you, Sir.

President.—My attention has not been drawn to these allegations. Generally these newspaper articles are submitted to the Diwan. Was this submitted?

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—It is not the practice to write back to papers, Sir.

President.—But the statement here is rather vehement—that an officer is receiving bribes and, if it is not true, the editor must be brought to book.

Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon.—There is only a vague statement, *viz.*, 'the Water Works Department' as a whole.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—No, in the distributing branch of the Department.

President.—Commentaries to the sections of the Penal Code say that allegations should not be general but should be specific and should be directed against a particular individual and then alone a charge will stand.

Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.—I think that a point like this was raised in the Madras Legislative Council about Hon'ble Members' asking questions about facts appearing in newspaper articles, and I think the Hon'ble the President ruled there that, so far as references in newspapers are concerned, there is not the slightest objection to Members' putting questions, but the Member putting the question on the basis of the information contained in the newspaper article must satisfy himself, by making independent enquiries, that the state-

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ments are true, and then ask the Government regarding the allegations contained in it.

President.—The point is not that he is now bringing forward any charge or anything of the kind. In a particular paper he says a specific charge of corruption was made against a specific Department, and is it not the duty of the Government to take notice of that? If the question had been in such and such a paper published on such and such a date, etc., it is all right. But the question does not contain anything of that kind. But in your answer you say the allegations are not true. If the allegations are not true, is the paper to be let off like that?

Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.—That is a different matter. This is not the stage to consider that. There must be a separate motion and separate representations.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—But is it not the President that should make a ruling?

Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.—I give only my opinion for the President's consideration.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I place my request also before the President to give a ruling in my favour.

President.—But, for a general allegation without naming the particular individual, can any action be taken against him?

Mr. A. Sankara Menon.—No.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I only drew the attention of the Government to the article and it is for the Government to do the needful. Government is in a better position to make an enquiry and come to a conclusion rather than a Member of this House.

Equal distribution of water to all house-owners in Ernakulam.

77. Mr. V. K. Kochunni Menon.—Will the Government be pleased to state if the maximum water supply be not sufficient to meet the full demand of the town, is there any objection to make an even distribution of the available quantity to all house-owners, and if so, what is the objection?

Mr. A. K. Vengu Ayyar.—The question is engaging the attention of Government.

Acquisition of lands for constructing Bhajana Mandals, etc., for the Depressed Classes.

78. മിസ്റ്റർ പി. സി. ചാഞ്ചൻ.—താഴെ പറയുന്ന ചോദ്യങ്ങൾക്കു ഗവൺമെണ്ടു സദയം മറുപടി പറയുമോ: —

(a) അധഃകൃതരുടെ ഭജനമഠങ്ങൾക്കും മറ്റും ഭൂമികൾ സൗജന്യത്തിനു വിലകൊടുത്തു (അക്വയർചെയ്തു) എടുക്കുന്ന വിഷയത്തിൽ വില്ലേജു ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാർ കാണിക്കുന്ന അനാസ്ഥ ഗവൺമെണ്ടിന്റെ ദൃഷ്ടിയിൽ പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ടോ;

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